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SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY PRESS SUMMARY FOR OCTOBER 20, 2005

This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for October 20, 2005. Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

POLITICAL, SECURITY, HUMAN RIGHTS

ZAMAN / OZGUR GUNDEM: Based on a tip, police conducted a military operation in Diyarbakir and detained 9 persons. Police were tipped off that a car, normally used to deliver daily newspapers from Adana to the southeastern region, would allegedly transport a terrorist organization's 6 new recruits to Van. The driver of the car, the recruits, and the people who would meet them were detained. The police are looking into whether the car had been used to carry alleged recruits before.

12. BOLGE / EKSPRES: Ceyhan district municipality started to deliver Turkish flags to the people of Ceyhan, who came to pay their water bills at the utility payment collection offices. Ceyhan Mayor Huseyiz Sozlu stated that people should show their love and care for the Republic by hanging Turkish flags at their homes on the 82nd anniversary of the Turkish Republic's foundation which will be celebrated on October 29.

13. OZGUR GUNDEM: Reportedly, Hakkari Jandarma Command (HJC) called Ali Erol and warned him that, if Erol planned to file a complaint about being kidnapped during a checkpoint search in Hakkari on October 12 (see press summary 10/17), he must say that the checkpoint was not a Jandarma, but a Police checkpoint. HJC reportedly dismissed any connection with the kidnapping and reportedly implied that the police should answer the charges.

14. OZGUR GUNDEM: Two people, who were detained in Sanliurfa's Viransehir district on charges of recruiting new members to a terrorist organization, have been arrested and sent to Viransehir's jail. Separately, seven people detained in Adana three days ago, have been arraigned. Two of them were later arrested on charges of "being a member of, and making propaganda for, a terrorist organization."

15. OZGUR GUNDEM: Ministry of Culture and Tourism stopped the construction of a mosque in Diyarbakir's Kulp district because the mosque was intended to replace a historical Armenian church. The Subgovernor of the Kulp district said that there were already two mosques in the village, and if another mosque was going to be built, there was enough room elsewhere in the village other than the location of the church.

16. EVRENSEL / OZGUR GUNDEM: Following Diyarbakir Governor's Office's probe into a monument erected by the Sur Municipality to commemorate Ugur and Ahmet Kaymaz's killing in Mardin's Kiziltepe district in November 2004, the Ministry of Interior started an investigation against the mayor of the Sur Municipality on charges that the municipality's budget was deliberately spent "improperly" for construction of the monument. Ahmet and Ugur Kaymaz are reportedly referred to as "terrorists" in the report of the Ministry.

17. YENI SAFAK: Road expansion work on the road between Van and Hakkari has been suspended due to depleted dynamite supplies. Expansion tasks will resume as soon as Van's Regional Directorate of Highways sends 5-tons of needed dynamite.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

YENI SAFAK / BOLGE: Edwar Mum, general director of the company that operates Mersin's Free Trade Zone (FTZ), said that the volume of transactions in the FTZ in the first nine months of 2005 has fallen behind last year's transaction volume during the same period. Harmonization with EU laws brought about changes in the FTZ status to where it is no longer covered under tax exemption procedures.

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